

WI Exposure Notification App Questions and Answers

What is the WI Exposure Notification app?

The WI Exposure Notification app is a new tool being launched by DHS that alerts users of the app if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This will help Wisconsin contain the spread of COVID-19.

How does WI Exposure Notification work?

The WI Exposure Notification app uses Bluetooth Low Energy technology (the kind that won't drain down your battery). This technology allows for the anonymous exchange of Bluetooth keys with nearby smartphones that also have the app enabled.

For further information on how Exposure Notification technology works please visit:

<https://www.google.com/covid19/exposurenotifications/>

How does this help the app users?

People who test positive for COVID-19 will receive a verification code that they can activate through the app. After activating their verification code, the app will notify other app users who they were nearby when they were possibly contagious. The app notifies those users with the app turned on (Bluetooth enabled). This doesn't use GPS or location technology, but is done through Bluetooth. This notification lets them know they are a close contact. This is why it is important for you to download or enable the app now. This will allow you to be notified quickly in case you are exposed, get the care you need, and avoid exposing others in your family and community.

How can I join?

It's important to have the app downloaded/installed or enabled **with Bluetooth on** for it to work properly. You want to do this before you even get sick.

For iPhone users, the WI Exposure Notification app can be enabled directly in iPhone settings with iOS version 12.5 or later.

1. Go into Settings
3. Scroll down to Exposure Notifications
4. Turn on Exposure Notifications
5. Select United States > Wisconsin

For Android users the WI Exposure Notification app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store starting Wednesday, December 23.

For technical support enabling your app please call our Help Desk at [833-941-1652](tel:833-941-1652).

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How is my privacy protected?

The WI Exposure Notification app uses Google and Apple Exposure Notification technology which has built-in safeguards for user privacy. The keys exchanged with other smartphones are not linked to your identity or phone number, and change every 10-20 minutes.

The WI Exposure Notification app does not collect or store physical location or personal information. Neither location nor personal information will be shared with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Google, Apple, or other app users.

Do I have to use WI Exposure Notification?

No. The use of the WI Exposure Notification app is entirely voluntary and you may opt in or out at any time.

How does the app know if I have COVID-19?

Users who test positive for COVID-19 will receive a text notification with a link that when clicked, will provide the user with the ability to notify close contacts. Your identity will not be shared with these contacts.

Will my identity be shared if I test positive?

No. The only information that will be shared with other users if you test positive and enter your code is the date of their exposure. We need to tell people this date so they know how long to self-quarantine.

How does the app identify close contacts?

The app only exchanges randomly generated keys with smartphones that approximate the current criteria for close contacts (i.e., being within approximately six feet of someone with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes in a day). The randomly generated keys exchanged with other smartphones are stored and periodically checked by your phone for a link to a positive COVID-19 case. If a match is found on a contact within the previous two weeks, an exposure notification is sent. Again, smartphones will only send the keys to other phones that all have the app installed.

How quickly will I be notified if I'm identified as a close contact?

If an app user you have been in close contact with gets a positive COVID-19 test result, how quickly you will be notified depends on how quickly that person uses the app to trigger notifications to close contacts. Users who qualify as close contacts will be anonymously notified within a day of the code submission. You will be notified of any close contact exposure that happened within the previous two weeks.

What do I do if I receive an exposure notification?

The notification on your phone will direct you to a webpage with information about your next steps as a close contact. This will include information on where to get a COVID-19 test, how to prevent spread to your family and community, and other helpful resources.

Is the Wisconsin Department of Health Services collecting my personal information?

No. The WI Exposure Notification app does not collect or share any personal identifiable information or location data with Google, Apple, or the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. DHS will not know who notified close contacts or who received exposure alerts.

Where else is this approach being used?

This approach is currently being used in other states, territories, and countries, and will launch in additional states soon.

What languages is WI Exposure Notification available in?

English and Spanish. Additional languages will be added at a later date.

Is WI Exposure Notification accessible to differently abled users?

WI Exposure Notification is designed to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The app is also compatible with smartphone assistive technologies for the visually impaired including VoiceOver in iOS and TalkBack on Android.

What phones can support WI Exposure Notification?

iPhones with iOS 12.5 or later which includes all models after and including iPhone 5s.

Android phones that support Bluetooth Low Energy with Android Version 6 (API 23) and above are also supported.

Will the WI Exposure Notification app work on tablets or smart watches?

No. The WI Exposure Notification app is designed for smartphones and is not supported on tablets or smart watches.

Will the Exposure Notification app drain my battery life or data plan?

No, the app uses Bluetooth Low Energy technology and shouldn't have a significant impact on your battery life or data usage.

Do I need to keep the app open?

No. You do not need to keep the app open for it to work. The app will run in the background.

Do I need to keep Bluetooth turned on for the app to work?

Yes. Bluetooth will need to be turned on for the app to work. This can be found in Settings under Bluetooth for both iPhones and Androids.

Do I need to be connected to WiFi for the app to work?

No. The app uses Bluetooth technology, and does not need to be connected to the internet.

Do I have to pay for the WI Exposure Notification app?

No. The app is completely free.

What did the state pay to use this technology in Wisconsin?

There is no cost for the Exposure Notification Express, the Apple/Google exposure notification technology that we are employing. This is a no-cost solution being offered to states.

Will this app work outside of Wisconsin?

The app will exchange random anonymous keys with other smartphones using WI Exposure Notification, Google and Apple Exposure Notification, or other apps using the National Key Server. A list of other states using the National Key Server can be found here:

<https://www.afhl.org/programs/preparedness/Crisis-Management/COVID-19-Response/Pages/exposure-notifications.aspx>.

Please review the current travel guidance here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/travel.htm>